Be Faithful and Attentive* — Book One

Chapter 1:

Being Faithful and Attentive:
The Divine Attitude

"When you work, I anxiously watch whether you operate in my Will, to receive the contentment of seeing Myself multiplied in your act. How attentive you should be, and let nothing escape you."

(Vol. 14: May 19, 1922)

Being Faithful and Attentive: The Divine Attitude

It is good to begin at the heart of the matter. What does it really take to live in the Divine Will? To progress in It? And to come to possess It? Above all it takes attentiveness. By far, there is no phrase that Jesus repeats more often throughout the Book of Heaven than "be attentive." Therefore, from the start, be aware that you must learn to always be attentive to the Divine Will no matter what you are doing, even if you're doing the most ordinary things. For even the most insignificant acts can be used by the Divine Will to form Its Life in you:

If the creature had to give Us only what is spiritual, he could give Us very little. But in giving Us also his little natural acts, he can keep giving them to Us always, and We are in a continuous relationship. The union between Us and the creature is never broken. All the more so, for the smallest things are always at one's fingertips, within reach of the little and the great, the uneducated and the learned.... Breathing, moving, attending to one's personal needs is proper to everyone, and these things never cease. If they are done to love Me, to let the Life of the Divine Will be formed in them; this is Our triumph, Our victory and the purpose for which We created them (Vol. 36: May 17, 1938).

For and In Jesus: The Divine Attitude

Therefore, whatever your daily duties, little by little you must learn to always do them for Jesus and in Jesus.[1] This is what it means to be attentive to the Divine Will. In this way whether you are driving a car, cutting the grass, changing a diaper or typing on a keyboard, your actions will have a divine value. To do everything for Jesus means to do everything with the pure intention of pleasing Jesus alone. Jesus says:

... purity in deed is so great that he who acts for the sole reason of pleasing Me does nothing else but send forth light in all his works. He who does not act rightly, even in the good that he does, does not do anything but spread darkness (Vol. 3: April 25, 1900). [Emphasis in all quotes of Chapter 1 added]

But Jesus also says:

The soul which is truly mine must not live only for God but in God. You must try to live in Me, for in Me you will find the vessel of all virtues, and by walking in their midst, you will be nourished with their perfume so much so as to be full as from a meal. Then you, yourself, will do nothing else but send light and Heavenly perfume. Because to live in Me is the true virtue; it has the power to give to the soul the same form of the Divine Person in Whom she makes her residence, and to transform her into the very divine virtues in which she is nourished (Vol. 3: July 9, 1900).

Now to do everything in Jesus is to give up your own ways, and to do everything in the same manner and with the same attitude that Jesus would, thus allowing Him the pleasure of doing the work in you. Jesus explains:

In living for God, the soul can be subjected to troubles, bitterness, and to being fickle, to feeling the weight of the passions, to interfering in earthly things. But living in God...no. It is entirely different, because the main thing in being able to say that a person lived in another person should be that he had left his own thoughts and even took those of the other, as well as his style, his own tastes and even more. He had left his own will to take up the will of the other. Thus, in order that a soul may live in the Divinity and dwell there, she must leave everything that is her own, that is, deprive herself of everything, leave her own passions; in a word abandon everything to find everything in God (Vol. 3: July 10, 1900).

Peace is a Sign

It becomes clear therefore, that to do continuous acts in the Divine Will, you must be constantly attentive to maintaining the divine attitude of doing everything for and in Jesus. One important sign of this divine attitude is that you experience inner peace. This peace will only be experienced when you are both obedient (doing the Will of God), and abandoned (accepting all that happens within or without as God's Will). Without obedience you will be disturbed each time you do your own will in opposition to God's. Without abandonment you will be disturbed whenever things don't go the way you planned or desired. This disturbance shows that you are acting neither for nor in Jesus, rather your human will is acting. Thus in order to act in the Divine Will you must have peace. Jesus explains:

◊ ...to act in God and not to leave the boundaries of peace is all the same. Therefore if you observe a little disturbance, it is a sign that you are exiting a little from within

God, because to act in Him and not to have perfect peace is impossible. Furthermore the boundaries of peace are endless; rather, in everything that belongs to God...all is peace (Vol. 3:
June 17, 1900).

◊ ...the true sign for knowing if a soul lives in my Will is in all that which happens, in anything, it happens in peace. This is because my Will is so perfect and holy that It cannot produce even the shadow of disturbance. Hence, if in contradictions, mortifications, and bitternesses, one feels disturbed, he could say he is in the shadow of my Will and not within It, he feels his own will as master rather than the Divine (Vol. 8: July 17, 1907).

And once when Luisa had spent an entire day disturbed, late at night, after she had calmed down, Jesus appeared and said to her in sorrow:

My daughter, today, with your disquiet, you have prevented the Sun of my Person from rising within you. Your disquiet is a cloud between you and Me, and it prevents the rays from descending into you. If the rays do not descend, how can you see the Sun? If you knew what it means to prevent my Sun from rising, and what a great evil it is for you and the entire world, you would be very careful to never again become upset! It is always night for those souls that are upset; the sun never rises. For tranquil souls, instead, it is always day: my sun wants to rise at any hour whatsoever; the soul is always ready to receive the good of my coming.

And then, disquiet is nothing else than a lack of abandonment in Me. I want you to be so abandoned in my arms that you need not be concerned about anything; I will take care of you and protect you from everything. You cost Me a lot; I have put much in you. I alone have rights over you. So, if the rights are my own, your care will be all my own. So be at peace and do not fear (Vol. 13: October 18, 1921).

Be convinced then, how important it is to always be disposed to the Divine Will by keeping attentive and at peace. For the Divine Will only "unfolds Its Acts according to the dispositions that are shown It" (Vol. 20: March 13, 1927).

The Current Act (often called "The Actual Act")

As a way of keeping attentive to the divine attitude throughout the day, Jesus has given us the "Current Act" (discussed in detail in Chapter 6). Current acts are made by simply calling the Divine Will to do with you, whatever you are doing. But these Current Acts must not become mere words, something only external. For then, while saying the formula of the Current Act, you would remain in the state of operating in your own will. No, the Current Act is designed by God to help the soul enter into and maintain the interior disposition of the divine attitude. Luisa explains this in these words:

To enter into the Divine Will, above all it is necessary for me to forget myself, my will, my interests — which for me no longer exist — and to preoccupy myself only with the interests of Jesus. That everything of mine disappear, and that, in the Will of Jesus, the Love, the Prayers, and the Reparations of Jesus Himself become mine. Thus, everything that is his, becomes mine. His Will, too, is mine; and since in the Divine Will there are all goods, past, present, and future; thus all these goods too become mine.

To live in the Divine Will is to live on all that Jesus possesses. But the "all" does not consist of a formula. It was said to me that the soul must enter into the Divine Will at the cost of whatever sacrifice, when God asks it, and the greater the sacrifices to enter into the Divine Will, the more perfect will become the transformation and the acquisition that she will make. Consequently, to practice entering into the Divine Will with repeated formulas and with repeated intentions in all acts, even minimal, in so far as one can, is acceptable to God, and is a setting out toward this Divine transformation whereby the creature lives and operates in the Divine Will (Vol. 12: March 23, 1921 — End note).

Human Weakness Supplied For

Having seen then what the divine attitude truly consists of, it becomes apparent that it is not always easy to maintain. Luisa complained of this: "My Love, many times it is difficult to always have this divine attitude." Jesus replied:

My daughter, what the soul cannot always do with her immediate acts in Me, she can supply with the attitude of her good will. Then I will be so pleased by her, that I will make Myself a vigilant sentinel of her every thought, of her every word, of her every heartbeat, etc. Moreover, I will place them as retinue inside and outside of Myself, looking at them with so much love as fruit of the good will of the creature.

When [however] the soul, merging herself in Me, makes her immediate acts with Me, I then feel Myself so greatly attracted to her that I do together with her that which she does; and I change her action into Divine. I keep track of everything and reward everything. Even the smallest things, as well as a single good act of the will, do not remain unrewarded in the creature (Vol. 12: March 28, 1917).

So, even when because of human weakness you lose your attentiveness, or become unable to maintain perfect peace — and thus lose the divine attitude — Jesus is still pleased with the attitude of your good will. And though your immediate acts then cease to be acts done in his Will, the good news is that, having firmly committed yourself to live in the Divine Will, this human weakness does not cause you to lose the Life of the Divine Will Jesus has begun forming in you. Only by taking your commitment back — through willful sin, through deliberately choosing to do your

own will, or through a period of complete neglect — can you lose the Life of the Divine Will in your soul. The following passages illustrate this:

◊ ...I understood the holiness, the beauty, and the greatness of living in the Divine Will. Then I thought to myself: Living in It seems a hard thing to do. How can the creature possibly reach that point? Human weakness, the often painful circumstances of life, unexpected encounters, the many problems that leave you at a loss — don't they all hold the creature back from living in this holy state that requires the greatest attention?

And my sweet Jesus, resuming his words with an unspeakable tenderness as to make my heart burst, added:

"My little daughter of my Will, my concern and my continuous longing to have the creature live in my Will are so great that when the creature and I have agreed with firm decision that he must live in my FIAT — that is my Will — the first one to make the sacrifice is Myself.

"To attain the goal of having him live in It, I place Myself at his disposal. I give him all the graces, light, love and knowledge of my Will, so that he will feel the need to live in It. When I want something and he quickly accepts to do what I want, I see to everything. And when he doesn't do It because of weakness or circumstances, not through lack of will or through negligence, I will make up for him and do what he was supposed to do. I turn over to him what I've done as though he had done it himself.

"My daughter, living in my Will is Life that I have to form — it is not virtue. And life needs motion and continual acts. If this were not so, there would no longer be life. At best, it could be a work, which does not need continual acts, but not life.

"Therefore, when because of unintentional indisposition or because of weakness the creature does not do what he should, I don't cut off the Life. I continue It. And perhaps in that same indisposition there is also my Will, which permits those weaknesses. Therefore the creature's will continues to mingle with Mine.

"And then, along with everything, I look at the agreement we entered into, the firm decision we made as opposed to any contrary decision. In view of this I continue my commitment to make up for what the creature lacks. In fact, I double the amount of graces. I surround the creature with new love and new stratagems of love, so he may become more attentive. I awaken in his heart the utter need to live in my Will. This need is for his own good, for it may make him aware of his weakness. He will then rush into the arms of my Will and beg Me to hold him close so he may always live with It" (Vol. 36: September 5, 1938).

◊ My good daughter, take courage and don't be afraid. I won't leave you nor can I leave you. The chains of my Will link Me to you inseparably. And then, why are you afraid that you will leave my Will? When you entered It, there was a firm and decisive act of wanting to live in It. So, too, in order for you to leave It, another firm and decisive act would be needed (Vol. 36: October 26, 1938).

So, how can the Life of the Divine Will in your soul be lost? The life of Sanctifying Grace, given to every Christian in Baptism can be lost only through mortal sin. One may be dormant in doing good or even commit numerous deliberate venial sins, and even though such a soul is not growing in the life of Grace, this cannot terminate the life of Grace in the soul. No, Sanctifying Grace is lost only through mortal sin.

The Life of the Divine Will, however, is a little more delicate. As has been shown, one may lose the divine attitude through human weakness, and thus cease to do divine acts — as Luisa did for a whole day (above) — but this does not terminate the Life of the Divine Will in the soul. Certainly, as with the life of Sanctifying Grace, the Life of the Divine Will is lost through mortal sin, but that is not all. From the September 5th passage above, we can logically conclude that any deliberate act of the will (chosen freely and knowingly) in opposition to the Divine Will, will terminate Its life in the soul. For this reason Jesus says:

...do you know who it is that places disorder into the soul? Sin alone, even the slightest sin, if the soul commits it voluntarily and attaches herself to it. Oh, how all of this deforms the soul, it removes her color, it debilitates her! But the different states of soul, the privations, cannot cause her any harm. Therefore, be attentive to avoid offending Me in the least, and have no fear of your soul being placed into disorder (Vol. 9: November 11, 1916).

And in another place, after a mystical communication, Luisa relates:

Wherefore, I understood that the soul must be careful to not fall even into the shadow of a voluntary defect — which are those dangerous clouds that impede entrance to the Divine Light (Vol. 3: February 12, 1900).

We may also conclude that if one is negligent in the practice of living in the Divine Will (over a period of time known only to God), this too, will cut-off the Life of the Divine Will in you. For by neglecting to pay attention to It, you show God you do not value It. By neglecting It, you do not feed and nurture It, and eventually this Life in you will die.

What should you do if you have the misfortune of losing the Life of the Divine Will in your soul? If you lose it through mortal sin, as in the past, make a perfect act of contrition, and go to the Sacrament of Confession as soon as possible. Obviously, when you are not in the State of Grace, neither can you have the Life of the Divine Will in your soul. If you lose this Divine Life without having committed mortal sin,

humbly beg pardon of God for your fault. Then, as you do in the morning, tell Him once again that you want to live and act only in his Will. With this you are immediately able to begin anew your Life in the Divine Will.

When your Attentiveness Fails

Considering how difficult it is to be continually attentive to maintaining the divine attitude (and that it could take years to obtain this grace — which is the grace of continual prayer), these passages are a great comfort. How much Jesus loves you! How much He longs for you to live in his Will! Yet, this comfort mustn't ever cause you to become lax. Remember, attentiveness is the key to living in the Divine Will, and when your attentiveness fails Jesus says:

Though you are in my Will, it's as if you were in a place where you don't care to do what's right for you to do, what's appropriate for you to do in order to adorn my Will, direct It and lavish on It everything you can. Being thus troubled in my Will, you're not concerned with receiving my creative and operative act. So neither can I give it to you nor can you receive it. You remain at a sort of standstill (Vol. 36: October 26, 1938).

And in another place He says:

Be attentive, therefore, because when your actions don't flow in my Will, it is as if the sun stood still in its path, and when you are distracted it is as if clouds covered the sun and darkness came over you. Nevertheless, when distractions are involuntary, one strong and decisive act of your will to return to my Will is sufficient to put the sun back in motion and with a swift breeze send the clouds on their way, thereby making the sun of my Will glow more magnificently (Vol. 14: March 16, 1922).

Attentiveness: The Road to Possession

Attentiveness is therefore the road that must be constantly travelled to come to the full possession of the Gift of the Divine Will. Until then, this Gift can be considered yours only "at intervals and on loan" which you must ask for whenever you wish to use it, as Luisa illustrates with these examples:

Suppose I was given some money of gold that had the virtue of multiplying to as much money as I wanted; oh, how rich I could make myself with this gift. Instead, another receives the same gift on loan for an hour in order to execute an action and then has to return it quickly; what a difference there would be between the riches I posses by the gift and that of the one who received it on loan!

Or, if I was given the gift of a light that never fades; thus, by night and by day I am in safety and always have the good that comes from possessing that light which no one can take away from me. It becomes a part of my nature, giving me the light of

knowing good in order to do it, and the evil of fleeing from it. Thus, with the light, given to me as gift, I scoff at everyone: at the world, at the devil, at my passions and even at myself; therefore, this light is for me a perennial fountain of happiness. It is without arms, yet it defends me; it is without voice, yet it teaches me; it is without hands and feet, yet it directs my way and makes itself a safe guide in order to bring me to Heaven.... On the other hand, someone else, when he feels the need, must go and ask for this light; therefore, he does not have it at his disposition. Since he is not in the habit of looking at things together with the light, he does not possess the knowledge of what is good and what is evil, and then, does not have sufficient strength to do good and avoid evil. So, not possessing the light, and continuous light, in how many deceptions, dangers and narrow ways does he not find himself? What a difference between one who possesses this light as his gift and one who must ask for it when he has need of it... (Vol. 18: December 25, 1925).

In the end, by perseverance in attentiveness to the point of keeping the divine attitude continuously, you will come to finally possess the supreme Gift of the Divine Will. Jesus explains:

...first I want to see that the soul truly wants to do my Will and never its own, that it is ready to sacrifice anything to do Mine, and that in all it does, it asks Me always, even on loan, the Gift of my Volition.

When I see that it does everything with the loan of my Volition, I
give It to the soul as a gift because, by asking for It again and again, it
has formed the empty space in its soul in which to put the Celestial Gift (Vol. 18: December 25, 1925).

Summary of the Importance of Attentiveness

The key to living in the Divine Will is attentiveness to It, even in the most ordinary things. Attentiveness means striving to constantly keep the divine attitude of doing everything for and in Jesus. Doing everything for Jesus means doing everything with the pure intention of pleasing Him alone. Doing everything in Jesus means giving up your own ways and doing things in the same manner and with the same attitude Jesus would do them. In this manner, you come to do your acts together with Jesus and they become one with his acts. One sign of this divine attitude is the peace you experience when you are both obedient and abandoned to the Will of God. To help you maintain the divine attitude, Jesus has given you the "Current Act." Even so, the divine attitude is difficult to constantly maintain. Fortunately, when you lose it through human weakness (and not by deliberately choosing to do your own will), although your immediate acts cease to flow in the Divine Will, the Life of the Divine Will that Jesus has begun forming in you continues. However, you must always strive to be as attentive as possible, because when you lose your attention you remain at a standstill, unable to receive the operative act of the Divine Will. Attentiveness is the road to possession. Until the Gift of the Divine Will is fully possessed, It must be

considered yours "at intervals and on loan," and so it must always be asked for. By persevering in attentiveness to the point of constantly keeping the divine attitude — which is continual prayer — you will come to finally possess the Divine Will as your own.

A Final Exhortation to be Attentive

My child, do not lose time, because every time you occupy yourself with yourself, you lose one Act in my Will; and if you knew what it means to lose one single Act in my Will...! You lose a Divine Act — that Act embraces everything and everyone, and which contains all the goods which are in Heaven and on earth; more so, since my Will is a continuous Act which never stops Its course, nor can It wait for you, when you stop with your fears. It is more convenient for you to follow It in Its continuous course, than for It to wait for you, when you place yourself on the way in order to follow It. And not only do you lose time, but having to appease you and to raise you from your fears in order to place you on the way of my Will, you force Me to deal with things that do not regard the Supreme Volition. Your very Angel who is near you, remains on an empty stomach, because every act you do in It, as you follow Its course, is one more unexpected beatitude which he enjoys being near you; and it is a redoubled Paradise of joys which you offer him, in such a way that he feels happy about his destiny of having you in his custody.... Therefore, be attentive; in my Will one cannot lose time — there is much to do. It is to your advantage to follow the Act of a God, which is never interrupted (Vol.19: February 28, 1926).

† †
The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation. Neither shall they say: Behold here, or behold there. For lo, the Kingdom of God is within you.
(Lk. 17: 20-21)
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Be faithful and attentive as if everything depended on you.
Be completely abandoned and at peace as if everything depended on God.

END NOTE

[1] According to sound Catholic theology and as quoted in The Theology of Christian Perfection (p. 209): "Everything in the Christian life must be reduced to doing all things through Christ, with Christ and in Christ, under the impulse of the Holy Ghost, for the glory of the Father." (See Endnote 5 of Ch. 2). Strictly speaking then, by means of Christ, everything should be done for the Father. If one does everything for Jesus, one should ultimately do so for the glory of the Father. Therefore, it is perfectly correct, if the reader prefers, to do everything for the Father, provided it is done in and through Jesus; for Jesus said: "No man cometh to the Father, but by Me." (Jn. 14:6). See also Vol. 6: Oct. 17, 1904.

Although devout souls in the past have certainly acted for and in Jesus, they did not act in the Divine Will since they had no knowledge of this Gift. It is knowledge of the Gift which allows one

to participate with Jesus in the internal acts done by his Humanity in the Divine Will. Jesus says: "As I manifest these things to you I also open the possibility of participating with Me in what I reveal to you." (Vol. 14: Oct. 19, 1922).

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